

**John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development**

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Americans' Attitudes About Work, Employers and Government

# **Work Trends**

*The Disposable Worker:*

*Living in a Job-Loss Economy*

By K.A. Dixon and Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D.

**John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development**

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Americans' Attitudes About Work, Employers and Government

# **Work Trends**

*The Disposable Worker:*

*Living in a Job-Loss Economy*

By K.A. Dixon and Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D.

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
JULY 28, 2003, 12:01 AM ET

Vol. 6, No. 2  
July 2003

# Table of Contents

*Background*

*Executive Summary* 1

*Section 1: Unemployment and Job Security:  
Concerns Over Economic Issues Grows* 5

*Section 2: Layoffs and the American Economy* 9

*Section 3: Coping With a Job Loss* 13

*Section 4: After the Layoff:  
The Search for a New Job* 17

*Conclusion* 21

*Appendix 1: Methodology* 23

*Appendix 2: Survey Results* 24

# Background

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers University was founded as a research and policy organization devoted to strengthening New Jersey's and the nation's workforce during a time of global economic change. The Heldrich Center researches and puts to work strategies that increase worker skills and employability, strengthen the ability of companies to compete, create jobs where they are needed, and improve the quality and performance of the workforce development system.

Since 1998, the John J. Heldrich Center has experienced rapid growth, working with federal and state government partners, Fortune 100 companies, and major foundations. The Center embodies its slogan 'solutions at work' by teaming with partners and clients to translate cutting-edge research and analysis into practices and programs that companies, unions, schools, CBOs, and government officials can leverage to strengthen New Jersey's and the nation's workforce. The Center's projects are grounded in a core set of organizational priorities. The Center works to confront the challenges of closing the skills and education gap, of re-employing laid-off workers, of ensuring high quality education and training for all students and jobseekers, and of strengthening the management and effectiveness of government programs.

Since its inception, the Heldrich Center has sought to inform employers, union leaders, policymakers, community members, the media and academic communities, about critical workforce and education issues that relate to the emerging global, knowledge economy.

The Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) is an outgrowth of the tremendous success of original survey research conducted under the aegis of the Roper Center/Institute for Social Inquiry. For twenty years, Roper Center/ISI had conducted high quality, high profile original research; this tradition is being continued and expanded. The Center, a nonprofit, non-partisan research and educational facility, is a leader in conducting important public opinion research in the public and private sectors.

CSRA staff have completed more than 350 survey projects, for a wide variety of clients, in the twenty years of survey research at the University of Connecticut. The Center for Survey Research and Analysis has extensive experience in surveying special populations, including studies of members of Congress, journalists, business owners and managers, parents, teenagers, college seniors, and university faculty. In addition to quantitative research, CSRA also conducts in-depth qualitative research, including nationwide focus groups, one-on-one interviewing, and case studies.

The staff has worked with clients to develop strong secondary research programs in support of on-going research in a variety of fields. Expert statisticians are also available for additional analysis of original and secondary data. CSRA strictly adheres to the code of ethics published by the American Association of Public Opinion Research, which, among other things, requires us to fully divulge our research methods, treat all respondents with respect and honesty, and insure that our results are not presented in a distorted or misleading manner.

To better understand the public's attitudes about work, employers, and the government, and improve workplace practices and policy, the Heldrich Center and CSRA produce the *Work Trends* surveys on a regular basis. The surveys poll the general public on critical workforce issues facing Americans and American businesses, and promote the surveys' findings widely to the media and national constituencies.

The series is co-directed by Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D., director of the Heldrich Center and Kenneth Dautrich, Ph.D., director of the CSRA.

### *A Commitment to Assess and Improve Job Security and Connect the Jobless to Work*

The *Disposable Worker* continues to advance the goals of the *Work Trends* series to give American workers a voice in the national economic policy debates of the current era, and thereby provide policymakers and employers with reliable insights into how families across the nation are judging and acting upon the realities of work and the workplace.

This survey also informs a larger series of projects tied together by the Heldrich Center's commitment to improve academic and public understanding of the costs and conflicts generated by worker dislocation as employers upsize and downsize their workforces on a rapid basis, and to suggest potential policy changes of use to state and federal governments as well as employers.

This June, Rutgers University Press published *A Nation at Work: The Heldrich Guide to the American Workforce*, a new book by Herbert A. Schaffner and Carl E. Van Horn that foregrounds the realities

fundamentally reshaping the economy and job market since the 1980s—trends now affecting the lives of millions of American workers—such as less job security, a premium on education and skills, the untapped potential of the working poor, and the competitive pressures of global labor markets. The book collects the strongest evidence from the best research to depict the landscape of the modern labor market, while gathering leading journalism and analysis that portrays representative stories and lives of the American workforce during the 1990s. The findings of the new *Work Trends* underscore the demographic and economic analysis of *A Nation at Work* with the perceptions and views of everyday Americans.

This analysis also will be used in a new project designed to promote policy alternatives for reconnecting the jobless to work through employer-worker-public partnerships. Through this project, the Heldrich Center is conducting interviews with corporate human resource executives, corporate customers of outplacement firms, the unemployed, service administrators, and executives of intermediary organizations. In addition, the Center will conduct focus groups with laid-off workers regarding their experience and preferences for public and private sector outplacement and career services, online job sites, and traditional government programs. This investigation will culminate in a set of recommendations for rethinking how employers and government provide job finding and career planning resources.



# Executive Summary

*Work Trends*, Vol. 6, No. 2, *The Disposable Worker: Living in a Job-Loss Economy*, is the fourteenth in the national survey series that polls American workers and employers about issues affecting their lives in the economy, the workforce, and the workplace, and how workers view the policy choices made by lawmakers and employers to address these concerns. With the publication of this report, the project's partners—the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut—have completed more than 13,000 worker and employer interviews since 1998 on a variety of critical economic topics, as well as long-term trends in job satisfaction, economic confidence, and workplace issues. This *Work Trends* report was based on worker interviews only.

This new *Work Trends* was conducted with 1015 adult members of the U.S. workforce between June 10 and 21, 2003, a time of economic uncertainty for many American workers. As the Federal Reserve continues to cut interest rates in a strong real estate market, millions of Americans are refinancing their home mortgages, lowering monthly payments, and enjoying the benefits of increased home equity values. At the same time, economic indicators are sending mixed signals about the nation's economy. Many industries, struggling to maintain their competitive edge in globalized markets, continue to lay off workers in large numbers. In fact, the nation's economy lost more jobs than it gained over the past two years, and workers

are remaining unemployed longer than during other recessions.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly one-fifth of American workers were laid off from their jobs during the last three years. The vast majority of these workers received no advance notice, no severance pay, and no career counseling from their employers. As a result, their confidence in the American economy and political leadership has plunged to the lowest levels since the *Work Trends* series began.

The latest June 2003 employment figures show that the duration of unemployment continues to grow. Almost 3.6 million people had been out of work for more than 15 weeks, representing 37.5% of all the jobless. The median length of joblessness, according to these most recent figures, increased from 10.1 to 12.3 weeks, *the highest point since July 1967*.<sup>2</sup> The nation's unemployment rate reached a nine-year high of 6.4% this June, as the economy lost 30,000 jobs. As reported by the US Department of Labor, the economy has suffered a total loss in 2003 of 236,000 jobs. Nearly every major industry in the economy has suffered losses, notably manufacturing, which lost 56,000 jobs in June alone.<sup>3</sup>

For workers who have dodged the layoff bullet, stagnating wages pose an ongoing threat to their economic security. The

---

<sup>1</sup> Carl E. Van Horn and Herbert A. Schaffner. "Coping with the Job Loss Economy." *Trenton Times*. 7.13.03

<sup>2</sup> Ryan Hess. "Job Losses Hit New Highs." *Employment and Training Reporter*. 7.14.03

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Altman. "Jobless Rate Hits 6.4%, Highest Level in 9 years." *The New York Times Magazine*. 8.8.03

American worker's average weekly pay-check, adjusted for inflation and seasonal factors, shrank 0.3% from March to April of this year.<sup>4</sup> Perversely, these job and wage losses occurred during a time when the gross domestic product (GDP) actually grew by 1.9% in the first quarter of 2003. While economic forecasters are split over the health and direction of the economy, many workers confront daily a volatile labor market and uncertain job security.

---

Worker concern over economic issues such as the current unemployment rate is at its highest level since the inception of the *Work Trends* series in 1998, with 36% of workers saying they are very concerned about this issue.

*The Disposable Worker: Living in a Job-Loss Economy* finds that nearly one-fifth of American workers were laid off from their jobs during the last three years. The vast majority of these workers received no advance notice, no severance pay, and no career counseling from their employers. As a result, their confidence in the American economy and political leadership has plunged to the lowest levels since the *Work Trends* series began.

The survey shows the current troubled economy is hitting many workers hard—particularly lower-income and minority workers. They are experiencing job loss, loss of income, and increased economic insecurity. To date, some workers, such as those in labor unions, teachers' associations, or who work outside the private sector, have experienced less dislocation and fewer layoffs. However, with many states grappling with large budget deficits, layoffs among these workers may be on the horizon. Many

of the men and women surveyed in this national sample of the American workforce have experienced job loss themselves or within their nuclear families. Because the survey sample (consistent with other *Work Trends* reports) excluded adults who have dropped out of the workforce and are no longer looking for a job—those often termed 'discouraged workers'—the report's findings may understate the degree of public dissatisfaction and concern.

Among the survey's striking discoveries are widespread national concern about the economy and job situation, deepening to profound concern among major groups of workers including women and African-Americans:

- Worker concern over economic issues such as the current unemployment rate is at its highest level since the inception of the *Work Trends* series in 1998, with 36% of workers saying they are very concerned about this issue. The survey shows that African-American workers are particularly worried. These workers are twice as likely as white workers to say they are very concerned about the current unemployment rate (61% and 31%, respectively).
- Among workers who have been laid off in the past three years, 47% say they are very concerned about the current unemployment rate, compared to 34% of workers who have not been laid off in this time.
- Concern about the job security of employed workers also is on the rise. Workers with less than a high school education are particularly worried, with 65% saying they are very concerned about job security. In stark contrast, 45% of workers with a high school education and

---

<sup>4</sup> Harris Collingwood. "The Sink-or-Swim Economy." *The New York Times Magazine*. 8.8.03



37% of workers with a college education or more say they are very concerned about job security.

- The majority (70%) of workers say that now is a bad time to find a quality job, more than at any time since the *Work Trends* series began. Only 16% of women workers maintain that now is a good time to find a quality job. In contrast, 30% of men think now is a good time to find a quality job.

The survey shows that despite recent economic forecasts predicting a recovering economy, many workers view the economy and the security of their jobs in a significantly more negative light. Workers remain wary, and those with a more precarious position in the labor market such as lower income workers and workers with less formal education are particularly concerned.

The new survey also documents the views of many U.S. workers who were laid off between spring 2000 and spring 2003, providing a rare window into the first-hand experiences of the recently unemployed. Many are now earning less money and some remain without jobs.

- Nearly one in five (18%) American workers told us they were laid off from a full- or part-time job (16% and 2%, respectively) during this time. Lower-income workers were particularly susceptible to layoffs during this time. For example, among workers earning less than \$40,000 a year, 23% were laid off from full-time work, compared to 11% of workers earning \$40,000 or more per year.

- More than half (56%) of all workers or their family members have been laid off at least once in their life from a full- or part-time job (50% and 6%, respectively), the survey finds. In addition, among workers with a high school education, 63% say they or a family member have been laid off at some point in their lives. More than half of workers with some college and 44% with a college degree or more say the same.

Workers who have already experienced job loss are wary of the future, and many are pessimistic that they can avoid future layoffs, according to the new survey data:

- Among workers who have been laid off in the past three years, one in two say that it is likely that they or a family member will be laid off from a job in the next three to five years. In contrast, 38% of workers who were not laid off in this time say the same. Among younger workers (age 18-29) 48% think that they or a family member will be laid off from their job in the next three to five years, compared to 35% of workers age 50 and older.
- Only 40% of workers who have been laid off in the past believe that they can take steps to reduce the likelihood that they will be laid off in the next three to five years. Interestingly, unionized workers are far more negative than non-unionized workers about their prospects for reducing the likelihood they will be laid off. Even unionized workers and those that belong to a teacher's association are skeptical that they can engage in strategies that will decrease their chances of being laid off in the next three to five years.

---

One-third of all workers did not receive any advanced warning of their impending job loss, and nearly one-third (30%) received only between one and two weeks notice. The majority (65%) were not offered a severance package or other compensation by their employer.

Although some employers notified workers of their impending job loss, as required by federal law, 64% of workers were laid off with little or no notice. The majority of workers have returned to full-time work since being laid off, but for many workers, particularly African-American workers, the job hunt continues.

- One-third (34%) of all workers did not receive any advanced warning of their impending job loss, and nearly one-third (30%) received only between one and two weeks notice. The majority (65%) were not offered a severance package or other compensation by their employer.
- The majority (74%) of workers have successfully found a full- or part-time job since being laid off (62% and 12%, respectively). Among white workers, 68% found a new full-time job, compared to 44% of African-American workers and 54% of workers of other races.

For the most part, workers see themselves as primarily responsible for finding new employment after being laid off. However, they desire a stronger role for government and employers in assisting workers with this process and to support them while they remain unemployed:

- *Workers express strong support for government services to assist the unemployed.* For example, 57% of workers strongly agree that government should assist laid off workers to maintain their health insurance, while 39% strongly agree that the government should help these workers to pay for education and training for new jobs and careers. Nearly one-third (32%) strongly believe that government should provide longer periods of unemployment insurance benefits beyond the typical 26 weeks.
- Overall, only 8% of workers say that President Bush is doing an excellent job handling issues related to jobs, while 31% say he is doing a poor job. Similarly, only 2% of workers say that Congress is doing an excellent job, while 33% say it is doing a poor job. Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say that Bush is doing a good or excellent job on these issues (67% and 19%, respectively). At the same time, African-American workers are more than twice as likely as white workers to rate Bush's performance on this issue as poor (51% and 24%).
- More than seven in ten workers favor the idea of the federal government providing unemployed individuals with a personal reemployment account to provide enhanced flexibility, choice, and control in obtaining intensive reemployment, training, and supportive services, as well as a cash reemployment bonus for early return to work.

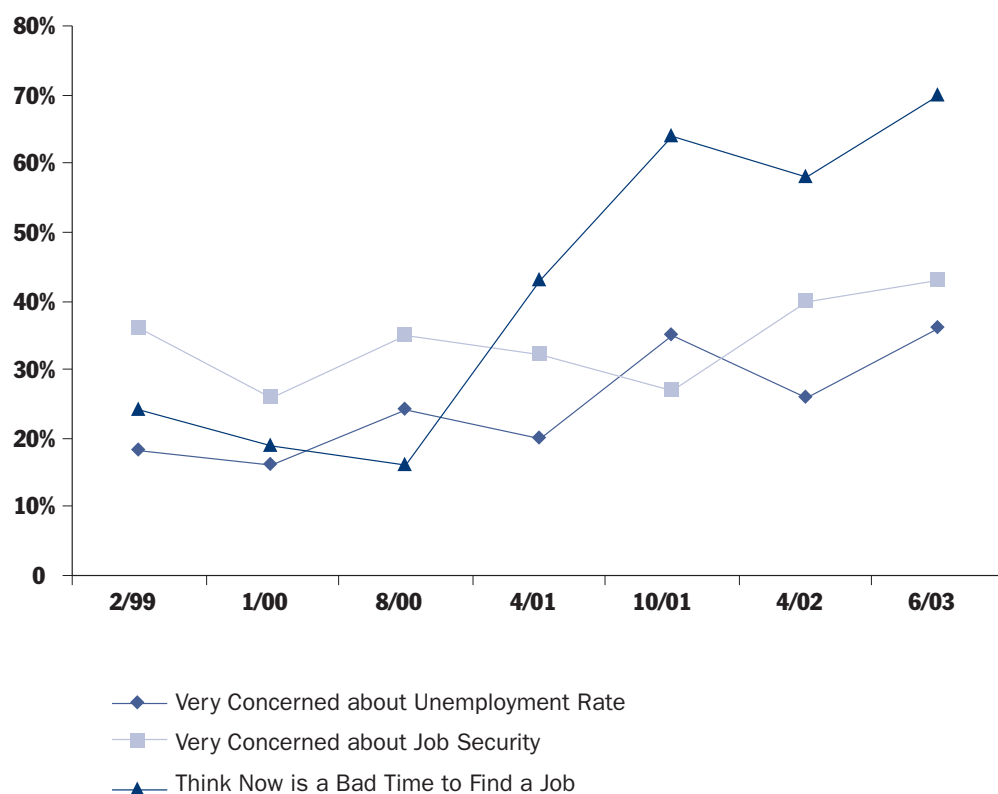
## Section 1:

# Unemployment and Job Security: Workers Show Deepening Concern Over Economic Issues

Since its inception in 1998, *Work Trends* has polled workers consistently regarding economic issues including their sense of job security, whether they believe times are right for finding a good job, and the severity of unemployment. *The Disposable Worker* portrays the most dramatic declines in the views of workers about the economy since the start of the *Work Trends* project. The rising rate of unemployment is coinciding with a skyrocketing rise in concern regarding unemployment. The new survey finds that 36% of workers are very concerned about

the current unemployment rate, the highest figure ever polled in the *Work Trends* series. In stark contrast, only 16% said they were very concerned in January 2000, before the 2000-2003 recession began (see figure 1.1). African-American workers, in particular, are worried about unemployment, and are twice as likely as white workers to say they are very concerned (61% and 31%, respectively). This heightened concern reflects that unemployment among African-Americans is rising at a faster pace than in any similar period since the mid-1970s.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, workers

Fig. 1.1: Concern About Economic Issues, Over Time



<sup>5</sup> Louis Uchitelle. "Blacks Lose Better Jobs Faster as Middle-Class Work Drops." *New York Times*. 7.12.03

earning less than \$40,000 a year are much more likely to say they are very concerned about the current unemployment rate than workers earning \$40,000 or more per year (44% and 30%, respectively).

Concern about job security for those currently working also is at the highest level since we began our research 6 years ago, and much higher than when the recession began in 2000. Today, 43% of workers say they are very concerned about this issue, compared with only 26% who expressed a similar level of concern in January 2000.

As with the unemployment rate, African-American workers are more concerned about job security than other workers. Among African-Americans, more than two-thirds (68%) say they are very concerned about job security, compared to about one-third (38%) of white workers and 43% of workers of other races. In addition, workers with less than a high school education are particularly worried, with 65% saying they are very concerned. In stark contrast, 45% of workers with a high school

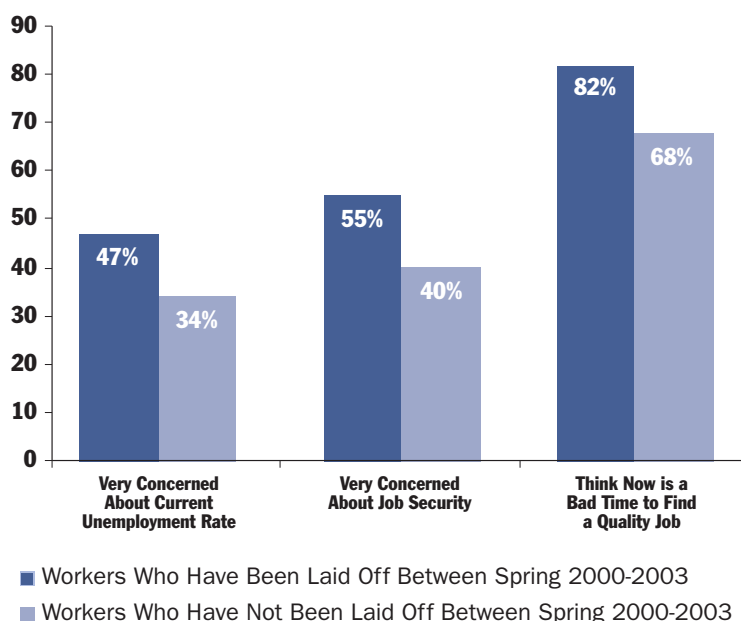
education and 37% of workers with a college education or more say they are very concerned about job security.

Finally, when thinking about the job situation in America today, seven in ten workers say that now is a bad time to find a quality job, more than at any time since the *Work Trends* series began. Women in particular view the current job market negatively; among women, only 16% maintain that now is a good time to find a quality job. In contrast, 30% of men think now is a good time to find a quality job.

Workers who have been laid off during the 2000-2003 recession are much more worried about economic issues than workers who have not been laid off. For example, 47% of workers laid off between spring 2000 and spring 2003 are very concerned about the current unemployment rate, compared to 34% of workers who were not laid off.

Workers are also more likely than workers who were not laid off to be very concerned about job security for those currently working (55% and 40%, respectively).

*Fig. 1.2: Concern About Economic Issues Varies by Employment Experience*



Finally, 82% of laid off workers think now is a bad time to find a quality job, compared to 68% of workers who had not experienced layoffs in the last three years (see figure 1.2).

While workers who have experienced job loss in the past three years express higher levels of concern than those who have not been laid off about economic issues, this level of concern is further influenced by workers' political party affiliation. For example, among Democrats who have been laid off in the last three years, 62% say they are very concerned about the current unemployment rate, compared to 48% of Democrats who have not been laid off in this time. Similarly, only 21% of Republican workers who have not been laid off in the past three years are very concerned, compared to 39% of Republican workers who have lost their job.

The same pattern is evident when workers are asked about job security for those currently working. Democrats that were laid off are far more likely than those who were not to say they are very concerned about job security (69% and 54%, respectively), as are Republican workers (53% and 29%, respectively). Finally, nearly all Democrats (92%) who lost jobs between Spring 2000-2003 say that now is a bad time to find a quality job, compared to 73% of Democrats who remained employed. Similarly, Only 57% of these Republicans say that now is a bad time to find a quality job. In contrast, 72% of those Republicans who lost their job in the last three years say the same.



## Section 2: Layoffs and the American Economy

Between spring 2000 and spring 2003, nearly one in five workers (18%) report they were laid off from a full- or part-time job (16% and 2%, respectively). During this same time, the survey finds that 19% of all workers had a family member who was laid off from full- or part-time work (see figure 2.1). However, certain groups of workers were much more likely to have lost their jobs. Lower-income workers were particularly susceptible to layoffs during this time. Among workers earning less than \$40,000 a year, one-fourth (23%) were laid off from full-time work. In contrast, only 11% of workers earning \$40,000 or more per year lost their jobs.

Workers in the public and non-profit sector and those who belong to unions experienced fewer layoffs than employees of private, for profit companies. For example, government workers are far less likely than those employed in the private sector to say they lost their job in the last three years.

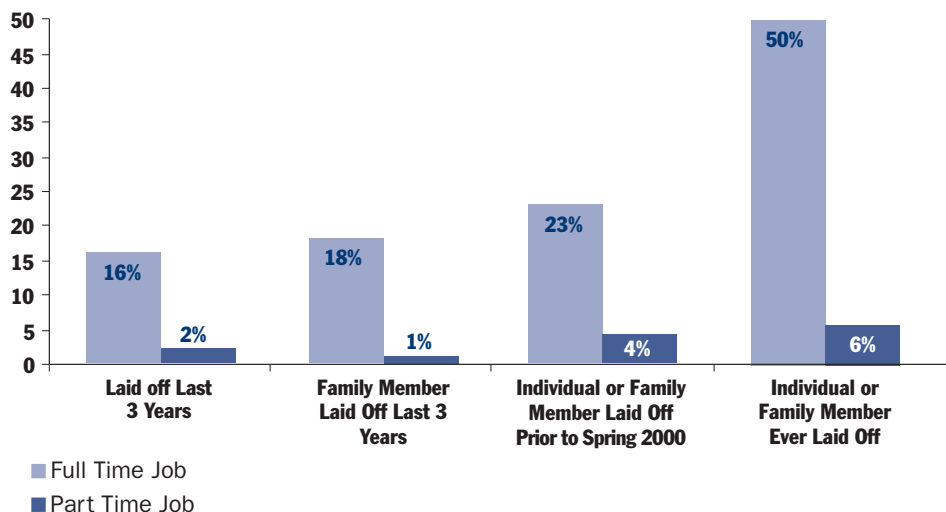
The majority (94%) of government workers and 92% of workers for non-profits were not laid off in this period, compared to 81% of those who work for a private, for profit business. Similarly, among union workers and those that belong to a teacher's association, 93% were not laid off between spring 2000 and spring 2003, compared to 81% of non-union or association workers.

---

Among workers earning less than \$40,000 a year, one-fourth (23%) were laid off from full-time work. In contrast, only 11% of workers earning \$40,000 or more per year lost their jobs.

The survey findings underscore the importance of the employment issue across the spectrum of geography and occupation in the United States. More than half (56%) of all workers or their family members have been laid off at least once in their life from a

Fig. 2.1: Percent of Workers and Their Family Members Who Have Experienced Layoffs



In addition, among workers with less than a high school education, 63% say that they or a family member have been laid off from a full-time job at some point in their lives, while 44% of those with a college degree or more say the same.

full- or part-time job (50% and 6%, respectively). In addition, among workers with at least a high school education, 63% say they or family have been laid off at some point in their lives. More than half of workers with some college and 44% with a college degree or more say the same. (see figure 2.2).

Among those who have been laid off at some point, more than half (56%) say that it has only happened to them or a family member once, while 25% say it has happened twice. An unfortunate 19% say that they or a family member have been laid off three or more times in their lives.

Four in ten workers who have been laid off in the past are concerned that they will again be laid off in the next three to five years, the data show. Older workers feel much more secure in their jobs than younger workers. Among younger workers (age 18-29) 48% think that they or a family member will be laid off from their job in the next three to five years, compared to 35% of workers age 50 and older. Among workers age 30-49, 41% anticipate being laid off. Conversely, lower income workers feel less secure in their job than their higher earning colleagues, and are more likely to anticipate being laid off (47% and 38%, respectively).

Interestingly, workers who are members of a labor union or teacher's association are more likely than those that are not to anticipate that they or a family member will be laid off in the next three to five years (48% and 41%, respectively). While such membership appears to have offered some protection from the layoffs that have occurred over the last three years, it does not appear to lessen worry about future layoffs.

Fig. 2.2: Incidence of Layoffs, by Level of Education

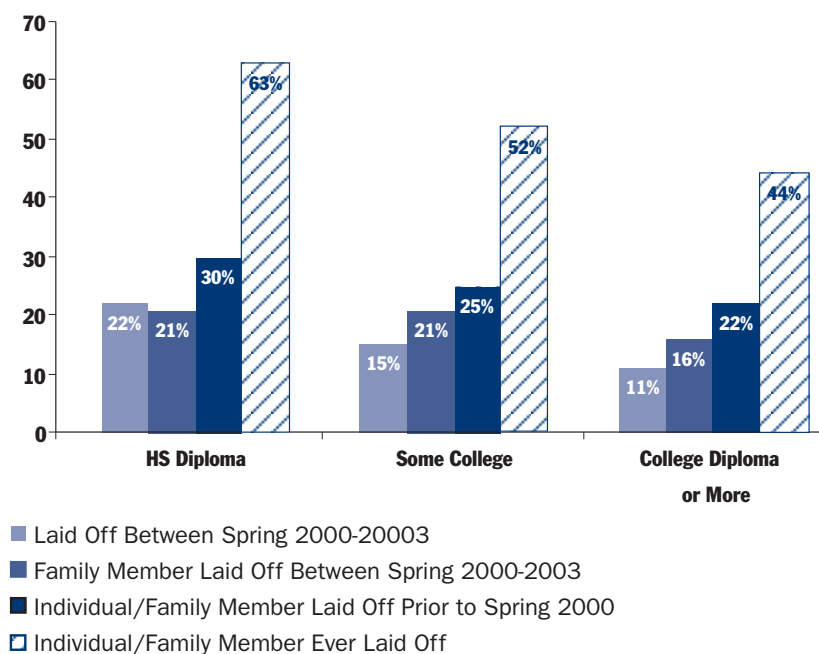
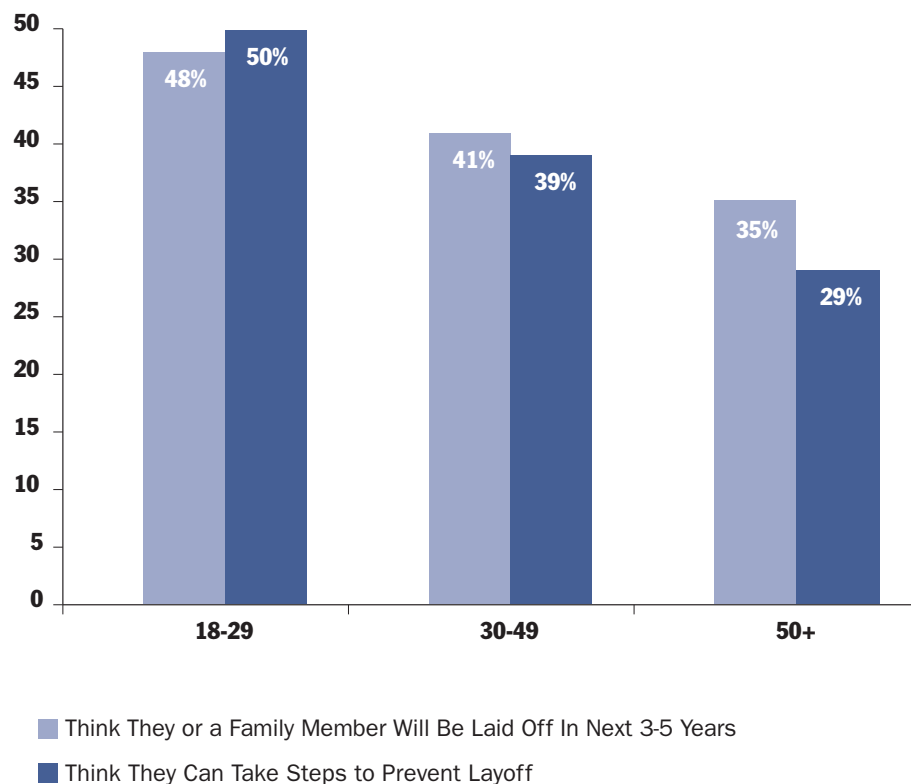




Fig. 2.3: Expectations of Preventing Layoffs, by Age



Workers who have experienced layoffs in the past are even less optimistic when it comes to efforts to decrease their chances of losing their job, suggesting one cause for the sense of economic insecurity many workers feel. Only 40% of Americans believe that they can take steps to reduce the likelihood that they will be laid off in the next three to five years. Again, unionized workers are far more negative than non-unionized workers about their prospects for reducing the likelihood they will be laid off. Among union/teacher association workers, 71% say that there are no steps they can take to fend off this eventuality, compared to 51% of non-union/association workers.

Women are more pessimistic than men about taking steps to prevent layoff with (61%) of women lacking confidence in strategies to reduce the likelihood of layoffs, compared to 45% of men who believe there are no steps they can take. Finally, the less

formal education a worker has, the less likely they are to believe they can reduce the likelihood of future layoffs. High school educated workers are less likely than workers with a college education or beyond to see opportunities for maintaining employment (36% and 46%, respectively). Conversely, younger workers are more likely to think they can avoid being laid off. Half (50%) of workers age 18-29 believe there are steps they can take to avert job loss, compared to 39% of workers age 30-49 and 29% of workers 50 and older (see figure 2.3).

The *Work Trends* survey also asked workers about specific strategies that can be used to decrease their chance of being laid off again in the future. Some workers cite the importance of taking additional training or education in their current field or to get training or education in a new field (16% and 13%, respectively). Other workers say

that working in a more secure company or industry or going into business for themselves are effective strategies for maintaining employment (7% and 4%, respectively). Workers also suggest engaging in a variety of strategies to make themselves better employees. Workers cite such things as increasing their productivity, working harder, being flexible, showing up for work on time, being disciplined and determined, taking

their job seriously, maintaining a strong work ethic, and doing their job well will reduce their likelihood of being laid off in the next three to five years. Finally, a few workers cite certain political or economic factors that they believe play a role in if they will be laid off, including free trade, NAFTA, the movement of jobs overseas, and the general decline of their industry.

## Excerpts, Worker Perspectives on How to Avoid Future Layoffs in the Job-Loss Economy

These quotes are a representative selection from an array of responses to open-ended questions.

### *Change industry or career, start own business:*

"Really looking for what I want to do and selling myself to those companies that are interested."

"Get into a growing industry."

"Find a job. Further education also always helps."

"I am taking steps to become self employed."

"I'm looking at a different career path."

"I want to work for solid company with deep pockets."

"Go to work for company been in business long time and has a union to protect you."

"Finding a career that is in demand, such as nursing."

### *Political Reasons*

"Get a stronger contract with my union."

"Quit sending jobs out of US."

"We need something to stimulate the economy."

### *Get Education/Training/New Skills*

"Diversify my skills."

"Learning different languages."

"Do the best I can, as well as get more training, education, and professional development."

"Workers today need to have a broad scope of skills."

"Changing professions to a stable one, and going back to school."

"Have skills that can't be replaced."

### *Self-improvement/Be a Good Worker*

"It is important to be a good worker, do the best job you can, and always show up for work on time."

"You need to make sure you're a good employee and they need you there."

"You need to be disciplined, diligent, and faithful in your work."

"If I bring in work, I am secure."

"Work very hard to prove how valuable I am."

"Be highly productive, at work on time, reliability on the job."

"Make yourself more valuable as an employee."

"Being more flexible in the work place and doing more than the job description."

"Make yourself as valuable as possible in current job."

### *Other*

"Investigate company before beginning employment."

"Keeping eyes open for other jobs that may be available."

"Work hard and accept low pay."

## Section 3: Coping with a Job Loss

The above findings indicate that workers understand the competitive realities of today's labor market, and that they must continually sharpen their skills and be productive at work to remain employed. During this time of economic uncertainty, workers in all industries are threatened with job loss, and must take the necessary steps to insulate themselves against the long-term unemployment.

For many workers and their family members, being laid off is a fairly recent phenomenon. For example, 31% of American workers experienced their most recent layoff within the last six months, while 20% say it happened about a year ago. Less than one-fourth (23%) of workers say that they or a family member were most recently laid off more than three years ago (see figure 3.1). Reasons given for the job loss vary, from the completion of seasonal work to the fact that the employer closed down or moved to a new location (13% and 24%, respectively). Union workers and those in a teacher's association were more likely than other workers to cite the completion of seasonal work as the reason for their job loss (20% and 11%, respectively). Workers earning \$40,000 a year or more are more

likely than those earning less to have lost their job because their employer moved or closed down (28% and 18%, respectively). Similarly, workers employed at firms with less than 250 employees are more likely than those at firms employing 250+ employees to cite insufficient work as the reason they were laid off (34% and 27%, respectively).

Workers also cite mergers, takeovers, and corporate restructuring, lack of adequate hours, and a slowdown in the economy as the main reason they were laid off. Several state employees attribute their job loss to state budget cuts or lack of grant funds.

One-third (30%) of laid-off workers say they had been on the job from three to five years prior to being laid off, while another 28% were on the job for more than five years. Only 17% say they were on the job less than a year, while 23% were on the job one to two years (see figure 3.2). In addition, layoffs do not appear to be confined to any one industry. For example, 15% of workers say they worked in the service sector prior to being laid off, while only 3% say they were working in the health care industry (see figure 3.3).

Fig 3.1: Time Since Most Recent Lay-Off

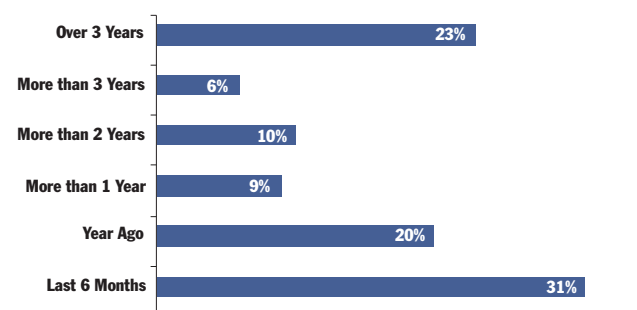


Fig 3.2: Number of Years on the Job Before Lay-Off

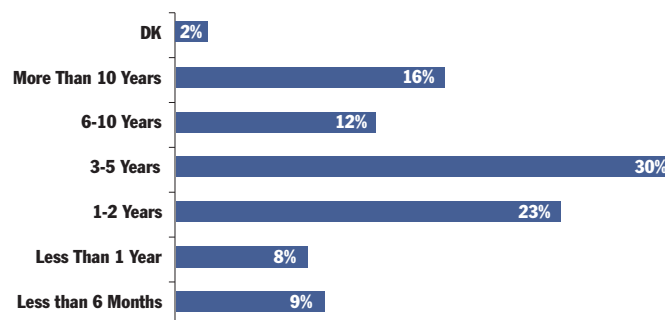
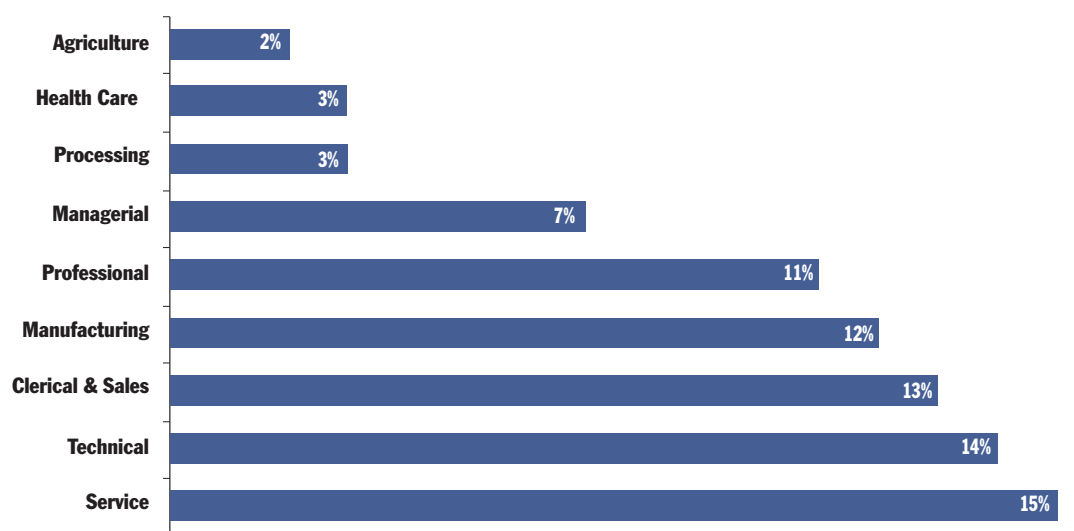


Fig. 3.3: Occupation at Time of Layoff



The survey indicates additional reasons for the economic insecurity of American workers. The majority of workers were not offered a severance package or other compensation and many received little or no warning about their job loss. The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) is a Federal law that requires employers with 100 or more employees to give their workers 60 days notice before a plant closing or mass layoff.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of the WARN Act is to provide workers with time to seek new employment or retraining opportunities and to plan for the transition phase after the layoff. Despite this notifica-

tion requirement, one-third of all workers report that they did not receive any advance warning of their impending job loss, while 30% received only between one and two weeks notice. Only a modest 16% had one to two months notice, and an even more fortunate 10% say they had over three months notice. More than half (56%) of laid off workers say that they had employer-sponsored health insurance at the time they lost their job, but the majority (65%) were not offered a severance package or other compensation by their employer. Union workers were less likely than non-unionized to receive a severance package (23% and 32%, respectively), although union employees

<sup>6</sup> In general, employers are covered by WARN if they have 100 or more employees (employing approximately 63% of the nation's workers), not counting employees who have worked less than 6 months in the last 12 months and not counting employees who work an average of less than 20 hours a week. Private, for-profit employers and private, nonprofit employers are covered, as are public and quasi-public entities which operate in a commercial context and are separately organized from the regular government. Regular federal, state, and local government entities that provide public services are not covered. Employees entitled to notice under WARN include hourly and salaried workers, as well as managerial and supervisory employees. Business partners are not entitled to notice. A covered employer must give notice if an employment site (or one or more facilities or operating units within an employment site) will be shut down, and the shutdown will result in an employment loss for 50 or more employees during any 30-day period. This does not count employees who have worked less than 6 months in the last 12 months or employees who work an average of less than 20 hours a week for that employer. These latter groups, however, are entitled to notice.

often get supplemental UI payments from the union, rather than severance. Workers who earn less than \$40,000 a year were far less likely than those who earn \$40,000 or more to receive severance or compensation (21% and 37%, respectively). Age and education also influence who received a severance package or other compensation from their employer. Among workers age 18-29, only 21% received severance, compared to 33% of workers age 30-49 and 35% of those age 50 and older. Likewise, workers with a high school degree were far less likely than those with college or more to be offered severance at the time of their job loss (28% and 41%, respectively).

Sometimes, employers offer dislocated workers certain services to help them deal with the loss of their job, such as career counseling or skill training, practices that are widely supported and promoted in the management and business literature. However, workers report that these outplacement and related services are far from consistently available. According to the survey, only 28% of laid off workers say their employer extended their health benefits,

Workers report that outplacement and related services are far from consistently available. Only 28% of laid off workers say their employer extended their health benefits, while 25% received a salary for a period of time. Less than one-fifth (18%) of workers received job placement assistance, while even fewer workers (16%) were offered career counseling or job or skill training.

while 25% received a salary for a period of time. Less than one-fifth (18%) of workers received job placement assistance, while even fewer workers (16%) were offered career counseling or job or skill training (see figure 3.4).

Company size appears to play some role in which workers receive services. Employers with 250 workers or more were more likely to offer services such as severance packages and extended health benefits but not more likely to offer services such as job placement assistance and career counseling. Among workers laid off from

Fig. 3.4: Share of Dislocated Workers Who Received Employment Services

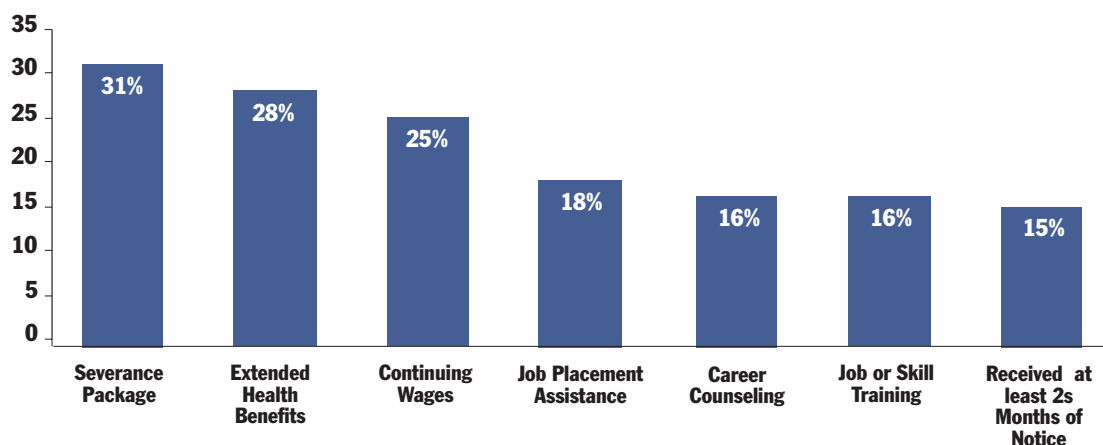
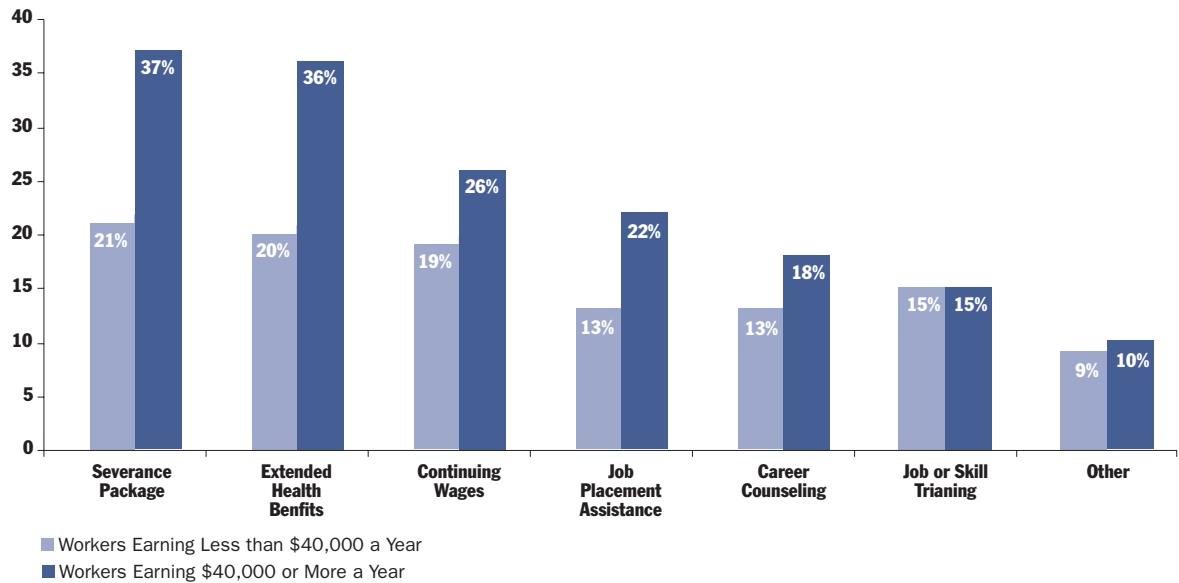


Fig. 3.5: Employer Services to Dislocated Workers, by Income



firms that employ 250+ workers, 36% received a severance package, compared to 27% of those laid off from smaller firms. Similarly, only 35% of workers laid off from these larger firms had their health benefits extended, compared to 25% of workers at firms with less than 250 employees.

At times of job dislocation, lower-income workers fare much worse than higher-income employees in terms of assistance services. Among workers earning less than \$40,000 a year, only 20% received extended health benefits, compared to 36% of workers who earn \$40,000 or more a year (see figure 3.5).

## Section 4:

### After the Layoff: The Search for a New Job

After being laid off, the majority (67%) of workers remained out of work for less than six months, according to the survey, while 23% were unemployed for six months to one year. Only 7% report being out of work for more than one year. Slightly more than half (51%) of laid off workers collected unemployment benefits while out of work.

Three-quarters (74%) of workers successfully found a full- or part-time job since being laid off (62% and 12%, respectively). However, the reemployment success varies significantly by race. Among white workers, 68% found a new full-time job since being laid-off, compared to 44% of African-American workers and 54% of workers of other races.

Among workers who have found a new job since being laid off, 45% say that their new job pays more than the job they had before they were laid off. More than half (52%) of these workers say they are making a lot more, while 44% say they are earning only a little more. Another 35% say they now make less, with more than half (53%) saying they are earning a lot less. Nearly one-fifth (19%) say they are earning the same.

The data also calls into question the value of the Internet as an effective tool for job searching, as only 8% of workers found a job this way. In looking for a new job, 22% say they found another job either through a friend or the newspaper. Many workers say that they started their own business, while some say they used a temp agency or were rehired by their previous employer. Only 19% enrolled in education or training courses while they were unemployed, although 69% of these workers say it was helpful to them in getting another job.

---

The data calls into question the value of the Internet as an effective tool for job searching, as only 8% of workers found a job this way. In looking for a new job, 22% say they found another job either through a friend or the newspaper.

Workers cite a number of services that they say they would have found useful if they were available. For example, 25% of workers say that assistance looking for work would have been useful, and 17% say that education or a training course for a new skill would have been useful. Interestingly, only 8% say that a longer time period for collecting unemployment benefits would have been useful.

Among the nearly one-fourth (24%) of laid off workers who have not yet found a new job, more than half (56%) have been out of work for less than six months, while 26% have been out of work for about one year. The majority (60%) collected unemployment while out of work, and 44% are still collecting these benefits.

These workers share similar views regarding job searches and reemployment assistance as those workers that have already found employment. For example, 26% are looking in the newspaper want ads, and 25% are using the Internet. However, 25% of workers say they would like assistance looking for work, 23% would like education or training for a new skill, and 8% say they would like a longer time period to collect unemployment.



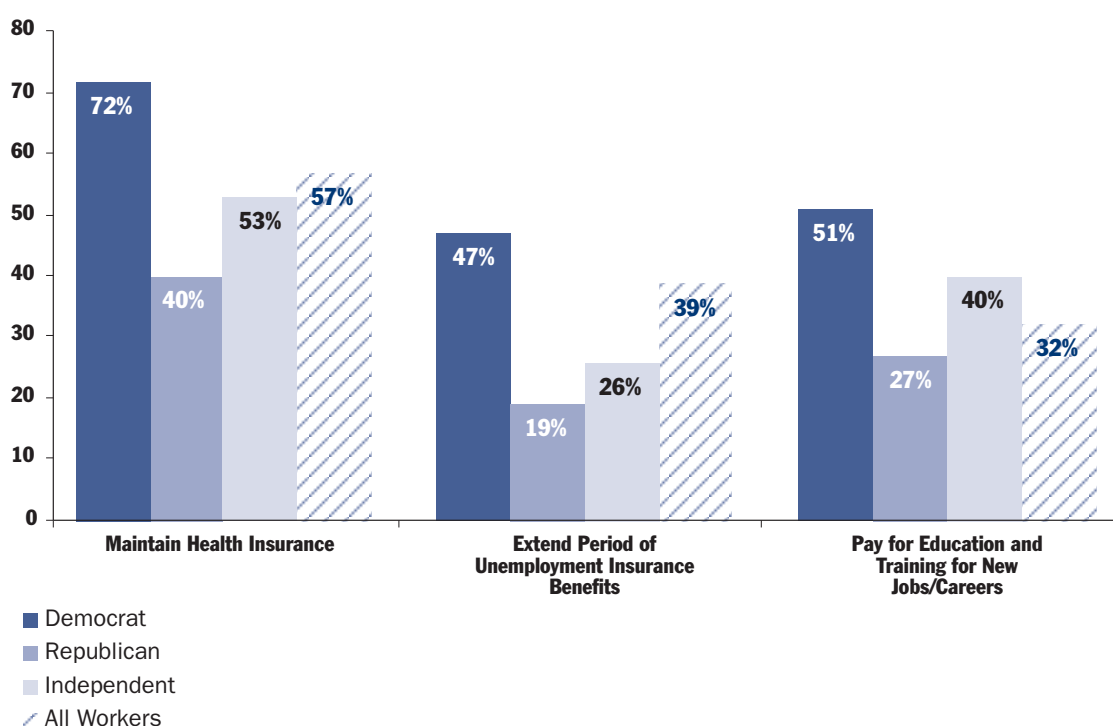
Government workforce services and programs are funded and designed to bridge the gaps in career and outplacement service and assistance available from some private sector firms. *Work Trends* seeks to understand and clarify the usefulness of publicly-funded services and identify opportunities for these programs to reach their potential. Among workers who have been laid off in the past, the new survey shows that 30% say that they have used their local One-Stop Career Center, which offers employment, and training services. One-fifth (20%) of workers have used the US Department of Labor's job skills database and career resource website, America's Job Bank.

However, the largest support system provided by the federal and state governments to the temporarily jobless is unemployment insurance, a program designed in the 1930s.

On a positive note, among all workers, the extension of unemployment insurance benefits is thought to be the most important service that the government can provide to help people. However, workers who identify themselves as Democrats are more likely than Republicans to support this strategy (41% and 31%, respectively). Nearly one-fifth (19%) say that job placement services are the most important, and 11% say that job training is the most important. However, only 20% of all workers believe that the government is primarily responsible for helping people laid off from work. More than half (52%) believe it is workers themselves who are mainly responsible, while 14% believe that employers are responsible.

The majority (57%) of all workers strongly agree that government should assist laid off workers to maintain their health insurance, while another 30% somewhat agree. Workers also strongly or somewhat agree that government should assist laid off

Fig. 4.1: Support for Government Strategies to Assist Dislocated Workers, by Party Affiliation





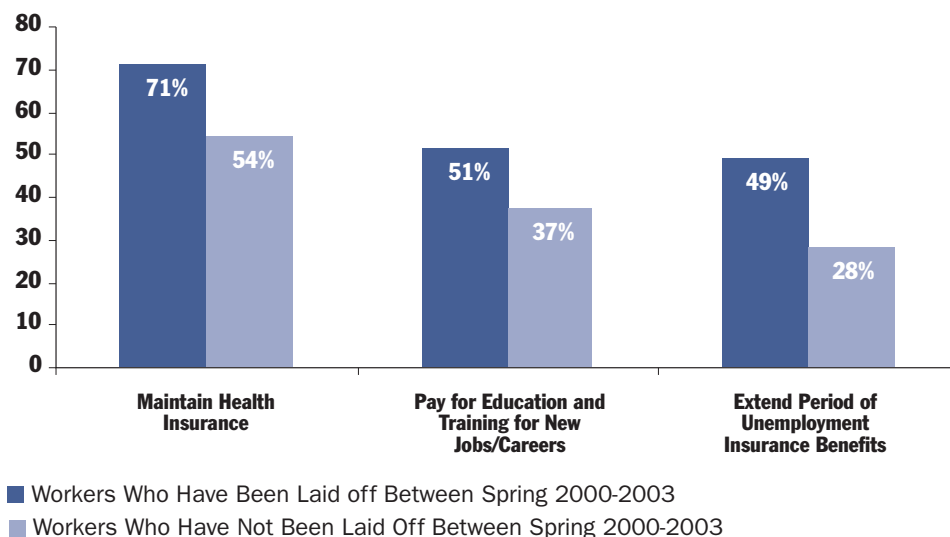
worker to pay for education and training for new jobs and careers (39% and 40%, respectively). Interestingly, few workers strongly or somewhat agree that government should provide longer periods of unemployment insurance benefits beyond the 26 weeks currently provided in most states (32% and 30%, respectively). Each of these strategies enjoys stronger support from workers who are Democrats (see figure 4.1), as well as from workers who have experienced layoffs in the past three years (see figure 4.2).

A strong majority of workers favor President Bush's proposal of providing unemployed individuals with a personal reemployment account to provide enhanced flexibility, choice, and control in obtaining intensive reemployment, training, and supportive services, as well as a cash reemployment bonus for early return to work. The survey asked the question in two ways, as a strategy being advocated by President Bush, and as one proposed by the "federal govern-

ment." Slightly higher numbers of workers favored the strategy when advocated by President Bush (79% to 72%). Republican workers are more likely to favor this strategy when it is attributed to President Bush and not to Congress (80% and 70%, respectively).

Overall, only 8% of workers say that President Bush is doing an excellent job handling issues related to jobs; in stark contrast, 31% say he is doing a poor job. Similarly, only 2% of workers say that Congress is doing an excellent job, while 33% say they are doing a poor job. Not surprisingly, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say that Bush is doing a good or excellent job on these issues (67% and 19%, respectively). At the same time, African-American workers are more than twice as likely than white workers to rate Bush's performance on this issue as poor (51% and 24%) (see figure 4.3). While opinions among men and women regarding the

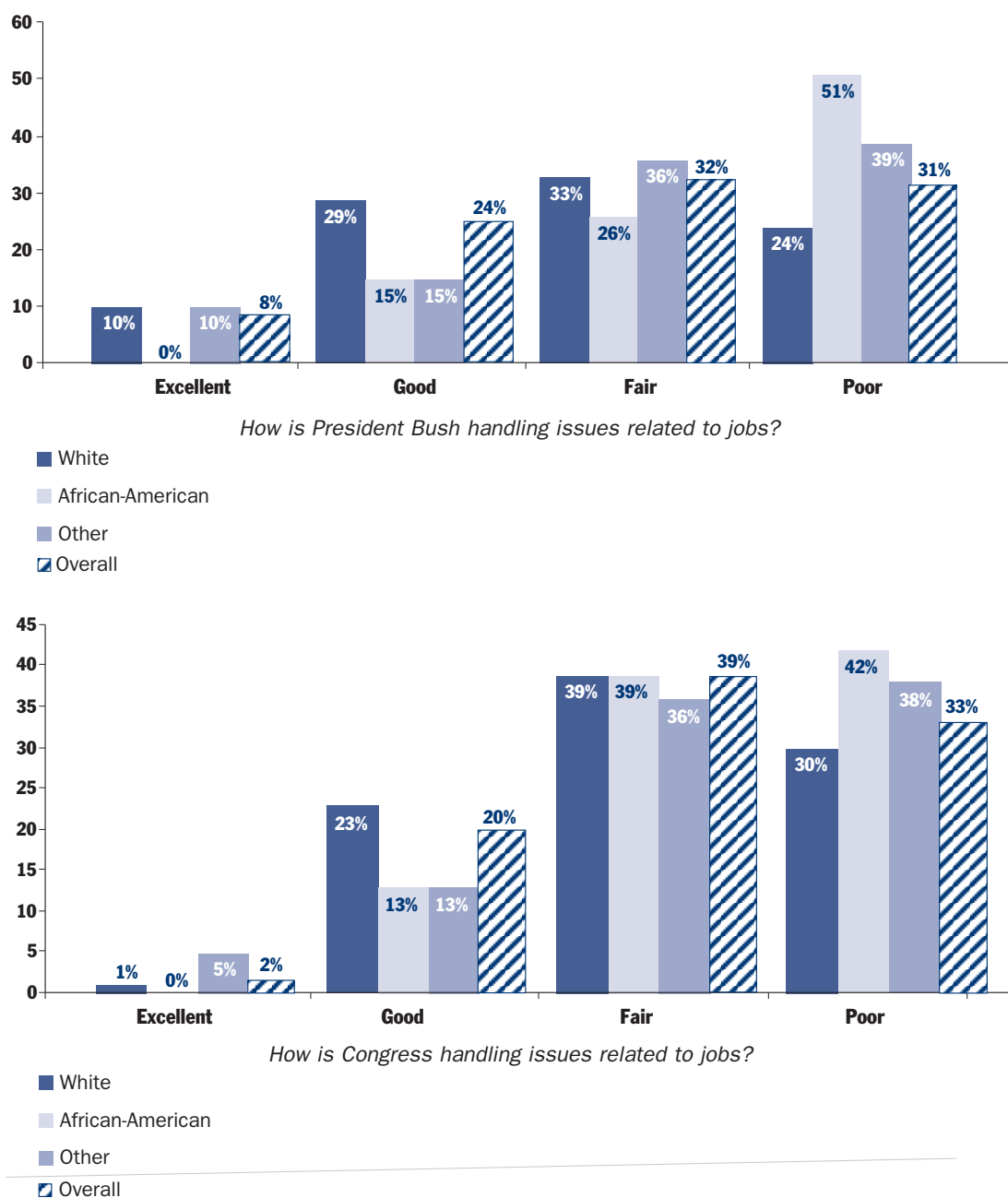
Fig. 4.2: Support for Government Strategies to Assist Support Dislocated Workers



performance of President Bush and Congress varies very little, low income workers express much different views than higher income workers. For example, only 25% of workers earning less than \$40,000 a year say President Bush is doing a good or

excellent job in addressing job issues, and 17% say that Congress is doing the same. In contrast, among workers earning \$40,000 or more a year, 43% rate President's Bush's performance regarding job issues as good or excellent, and 30% rate Congress similarly.

Fig. 4.3: Workers Rate the President and Congress on Job Issues, by Race



## Conclusion: What Lies Beneath

The findings of this *Work Trends* survey are striking in many respects. Notable journalism and analysis during recent years have established that public concerns about the economy reach wider and deeper than indicated by the unemployment rate, the Dow Jones average, and other mainstream indicators. By exploring the views of those who have lost their jobs, as well as those who remain employed, this survey portrays in fresh detail what lies beneath the economic anxiety and worry among workers of various income and education levels, ethnic groups, and political affiliation.

Large numbers of workers are experiencing job loss themselves or in their families, but find sporadic or little access to services that could reconnect the unemployed to jobs and particularly jobs that ARE of equal or greater income. Few workers have benefited from policies such as the WARN Act, extended health insurance (COBRA), and public job placement services and One-Stop Centers. Workers report that relatively few employers provide out-placement services or severance.

It follows therefore that most workers see themselves as primarily responsible for finding new employment after being laid off, but are dissatisfied with this arrangement. They seek a stronger role for government and employers in assisting workers with this process and to support them while they remain unemployed. Majorities of workers strongly agree that government should assist laid off workers to maintain their health insurance, while many strongly agree that the government should help these workers to pay for education and training for new jobs and careers.

---

As our survey data show, when workers lose their jobs, they lose confidence about preventing and coping with job loss in the future.

The current mix of federal supports and employer assistance for the unemployed is a patchwork affair that falls far short of what workers say they would prefer.

The continuing decline of union and association protections, the ongoing importance of high profit margins to the capital markets, and the ready availability of moving service and production facilities to developing nations, suggest that the benefits of reducing payroll and laying off workers are a ready option for employers. While in many cases these layoffs are necessary, often it is workers alone who bear the costs of losing and finding a job, providing for their health care and retirement benefits, acquiring job training and skills, and otherwise improving their employability. For many Americans, it is they who shoulder the social and economic costs of an inefficient labor market and economy. This reality on the ground for our workforce underscores that the volatility of the job market contributes to sluggish consumer confidence, restrained spending, and worries about the future. As our survey data show, when workers lose their jobs, they begin to lose their confidence about preventing and coping with job loss in the future.

Stronger and more coordinated partnerships among employers, government, and workers would improve the efficiency of supply and demand in the labor market, and boost worker confidence in the economy. That national political dialogue about solu-

tions to the changing realities of today's workforce would be welcomed by America's workers can be seen by the strong support offered for the notion of 're-employment' accounts advocated for just a few days by the Bush Administration some months ago.

Through 2003 and 2004, the Heldrich Center with its partners will seek new answers to these challenges by meeting, listening, and evaluating the views of thousands of human resource and placement executives, labor market experts, govern-

ment managers, and workers themselves about the nature of unemployment in today's economy. We will seek their experiences, preferences, and views about effective practices and public and private investments in the skills, value, and employability of workers. Many Americans or their loved ones will experience job loss in the future, and experience the risk of lost savings, lost homes, and lost dreams. That challenge should be met by new partnerships, new policies, and a renewed public interest in the value of the American worker.

## Appendix 1: Methodology

The employee survey was conducted from June 10 - 21, 2003 by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut. This report is based on a total of 1,015 telephone interviews completed with adult members of the workforce in the contiguous United States.

Interviews were conducted at the CSRA's interviewing facility in Storrs, Connecticut, using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. All CSRA surveys are conducted by professional survey interviewers who are trained in standard protocols for administering survey instruments. All interviewers assigned to this survey participated in special training conducted by senior project staff. The draft survey questionnaire and field protocols received extensive testing prior to the start of the formal interviewing period. Interviews were extensively monitored by center staff to insure CSRA standards for quality were continually met.

The sample for this survey was stratified to insure that regions, as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, were represented in proportion to their share of the total U.S. population. Within each of these regions, telephone numbers were generated through a random-digit-dial telephone methodology to insure that each possible residential telephone number had an equal probability of selection. Telephone banks which contain no known residential telephone numbers were removed from the sample selection process. The sample was generated using the GENESYS sampling database under the direction of a CSRA survey methodologist.

Once selected, each telephone number was contacted a minimum of four times to attempt to reach an eligible respondent. Households where a viable contact was made were called up to 25 additional times. All households who initially refused to be interviewed were contacted at least one additional time by a senior interviewer who attempted to elicit cooperation. Within each household one adult was randomly selected to complete the interview.

A total of 1,484 adults were interviewed for this survey. Respondents who worked full or part time, or who were unemployed and looking for work, received a full interview. A total of 486 respondents who did not meet these criteria received a short interview that included demographic questions. The results of this report are based on a total of 1,015 complete interviews with members of the workforce. The final results were weighted to adjust for disproportionate probabilities of selection based on household size and telephone lines; additional weights were applied to match U.S. Bureau of the Census estimates for age, educational attainment, gender and race.

The sample error associated with a survey of this size is +/- 3%, meaning that there is less than one chance in twenty that the results of a survey of this size would differ by more than 3% in either direction from the results which would be obtained if all members of the workforce in the contiguous U.S. had been selected. The sample error is larger for sub-groups. CSRA also attempted to minimize other possible sources of error in this survey.

## Appendix 2: Survey Results

INT1. Hello, my name is \$I and I'm calling from the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut. We're conducting a brief national survey of the American workforce. May I please speak to the person in your household who is at least 18 years old and who has the next birthday?

QS1. Are you currently employed, are you unemployed and looking for work, or are you not employed and not looking for work? N=1484

Employed	QS2	60%
Unemployed		
looking for work	IQ1	9%
Unemployed and not		
looking for work	INT2	31%
Don't know	D8	0%
Refused	D8	

QS2. Which statement best describes your current employment situation (READ CHOICES 1-5): N=889

I work full-time for only one employer		73%
I work full-time for one employer and part-time for another employer		5%
I work one part-time job		11%
I work two or more part-time jobs		2%
I am self-employed		9%
Don't know	D8	0%
Refused	D8	

QS3. How many hours do you work in a typical week? N =886

Enter 2 digits 00-80	IQ1	96%
80 or more hours		
per week	IQ1	2%
Don't know	IQ1	1%
Refused	IQ1	

IQ1. I'm going to read you a list of some economic issues. For each issue that I read, please tell me whether you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about this. N=1015

Q1. The current unemployment rate. (probe with categories 1-4 as needed) N=1015

Very concerned	36%
Somewhat concerned	38%
Not too concerned	14%
Not at all concerned	11%
Don't know	1%
Refused	0%

Q2. Job security for those currently working . N=1015

Very concerned	43%
Somewhat concerned	39%
Not too concerned	9%
Not at all concerned	8%
Don't know	1%
Refused	0%

Q3. Thinking about the job situation in America today, would you say that now is a good time or a bad time to find a quality job? N=1015

Good	23%
Bad	70%
Don't know	7%
Refused	

Q4a. During the last 3 years—that is, Spring 2000 through Spring 2003—were you laid off from a full- or part-time job? N=1015

Yes, full-time job (Go to Q4d)	16%
Yes, part-time job (Go to Q4d)	2%
No (Go To Q4c)	83%
DK/ref (Go to Q4c)	0%

Q4b. During the last 3 years, that is, Spring 2000 through Spring 2003—was one of your family members laid off from a full- or part-time job?

N=1015

Yes, full-time job (Go to Q4d)	18%
Yes, part-time job (Go to Q4d)	1%
No (Go to Q4c)	80%
DK/ref (Go to Q4c)	0%

Q4c. Have you or a family member ever been laid off from a full- or part-time job? N=780

Yes, full-time job (Go to Q4d)	23%
Yes, part-time job (Go to Q4d)	4%
No (Go to Q27)	73%
DK/ref (Go to Q27)	0%

Q4d. How often has that happened to you or a family member? N=502

Once	56%
Twice	25%
Three times	9%
Four to five times	6%
More than five times	4%
DK/ref	1%

Q4e. Do you think it is likely that you or a family member will be laid off from a job in the next three to five years? N=502

Yes	42%
No	48%
DK/ref	10%

Q4f. Do you think there are steps you can take to reduce the likelihood that you will be laid off in the next three to five years? N=502

Yes	40%
No	53%
DK/ref	7%

Q4g. What steps are these? (open-ended, pre-coded) N=263

Get additional training or education in my current field	16%
Get training or education in a new field	13%
Go back to college for a degree	4%
Move to a location where jobs are more plentiful in my field	1%
Other	42%



**Thinking about the most recent time that you or a family member was laid off from a full-time job....**

**Q5. How long ago were you or a family member laid off?**

**N=502**

Within the last six months	31%
About a year ago	20%
More than a year ago	9%
More than two years ago	10%
More than three years ago	6%
Over three years ago	23%
Dk/ref	0%

**Q6. Of the following, which best describes the reason for the job loss?**

**N=502**

Employer closed down or moved	24%
Insufficient work at the employer	29%
Seasonal job, work completed	13%
Other reason (please describe)	31%
DK/ref	3%

**Q7. How many years had you or your family member been employed at the job prior to being laid off?**

**N=502**

Less than six months	9%
Less than one year	8%
One to two years	23%
Three to five years	30%
Six to ten years	12%
More than ten years	16%
DK/ref	2%

**Q8. What was your occupation at the time you were laid off ? (open-end, pre-code)**

**N=502**

Professional	11%
Managerial	7%
Service	15%
Manufacturing	12%
Processing	3%
Technical	14%
Clerical and sales	13%
Agriculture	2%
Health care	3%
Other	12%

**Q9. Did you have employer-sponsored health insurance at the time you were laid off? N= 502**

Yes	56%
No	39%
DK/ref	5%

**Q10. How far in advance of your lay off did you receive notice from your employer? N= 502**

No advance warning	34%
1 week	16%
2 weeks	14%
1 month	11%
2 months	5%
over three months	10%
DK/ref	10%

**Q11. Did your employer offer you a severance package or other compensation? N= 502**

Yes	31%
No	65%
DK/ref	5%

**Q12. I am going to read you a list of services that employers sometimes offer laid off workers. For each one, please tell me whether this services was made available to you: N=502**

Continuing wages or salary for a period of time	25%
Career counseling	16%
Job placement assistance	18%
Extended health benefits	28%
Job or skill training	16%
Other	8%
DK/ref	2%

**Q13. Since being laid off, have you found a new full- or part-time job? N=502**

Full-time job (Go to Q14a)	62%
Part-time job (Go to Q14a)	12%
No (Go to Q21)	24%
DK/ref (Go to Q21)	2%

**Questions for Laid-off Workers Who Have Found a New Job**

**Q14a. Does your new job pay the same amount, more, or less than the job you had before you were laid off? N=373**

More (Go to Q14b)	45%
Same (Go to Q15)	19%
Less (Go to Q14c)	35%

**Q14b. Is that lot more or a little more than before? N=173**

A lot more	52%
A little more	44%
DK/ref	4%

**Q14c. Is that a lot less or a little less than before? N=130**

A lot less	53%
A little less	45%
DK/ref	3%

**Q15. After being laid-off, how long did you remain out of work? N=373**

Less than six months	67%
six months to one year	23%
One to two years	6%
Two to three years	1%
DK/ref	3%

**Q16. After being laid-off, did you collect unemployment benefits from the government? N= 373**

Yes	51%
No	46%
DK/ref	3%

**Q17. After being laid-off, how did you find another job? (select all that apply)—open ended, pre-coded N=373**

Through a friend	22%
Through the newspaper	22%
Through the internet	5%
From a school or college placement office	3%
Other	44%
Dk/ref	5%

**Q 18a. When you were unemployed, did you enroll in any education or training courses? N=373**

Yes (Go to Q18b)	19%
No	81%
DK/ref	1%

**Q18b. Was the education or training course helpful to you in getting another job? N=69**

Yes	64%
No	34%
DK/ref	2%

**Q19. After you were laid off and when you were looking for a job, what other services would you have found useful in your search? (select all that apply) N=373**

Assistance looking for work	25%
Longer time period for unemployment benefits	8%
Education or training courses for a new skill	17%
Assistance in relocating to a community where jobs are more plentiful	7%
Other	21%
DK/ref	22%

**Q20. When people are laid off from work, who is mainly responsible for helping them. Is it government, employers or workers themselves? N=373**

Government	17%
Employer	18%
Worker	50%
None—VOLUNTEER	1%
All three equally—VOLUNTEER	11%
DK/ref	3%

#### Questions for Laid Off Workers Who Have Not Found a New Job

**Q21. How long have you been out of work? N=129**

Less than six months	56%
About a year	26%
About two years	9%
About three years	2%
More than three years	3%
DK/ref	5%

**Q22. After being laid-off, did you collect unemployment benefits from the government? N=129**

Yes (Go to Q23)	60%
No (Go to Q24)	33%
DK/ref	7%

**Q23. Are you currently still collecting these benefits? N=77**

Yes	44%
No	55%
DK/ref	1%

**Q24. What approaches have you been using to find another job? Open end, pre coded, accept up to three methods N=129**

Through a friend	11%
Through the newspaper	26%
Through the internet	25%
From a school or college placement office	5%
Other (please describe)	23%
I am still unemployed	10%
DK/ref	

**Q25. After you were laid off and when you were looking for a job, what other services would you have found useful in your search? (select all that apply) N=129**

Assistance looking for work	25%
Longer time period for unemployment benefits	8%
Education or training courses for a new skill	23%
Assistance in relocating to a community where jobs are more plentiful	4%
Other	18%
DK/ref	22%

**Q26. When people are laid off from work, who is mainly responsible for helping them. Is it government, employers or workers themselves? N=642**

Government	21%
Employer	12%
Worker	52%
None	1%
All three equally	10%
DK/ref	3%

#### Questions for All Workers

**Q27. When a person is laid off from his or her job, what is the most important service that the government can provide to help people? [open-ended, pre-coded] N=1015**

Unemployment insurance benefits	33%
Job placement services	19%
Job training	11%
Assistance with relocation to an area with more jobs	1%
Extend health insurance	8%
Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit	0%
DK/ref	9%

**For the following questions, please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.**

**Q28. Government should assist laid off workers to pay for education and training for new jobs and careers N=1015**

Strongly agree	39%
Somewhat agree	40%
Somewhat disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	8%
DK/ref	1%

**Q29. Government should assist laid off workers to maintain their health insurance. N=1015**

Strongly agree	57%
Somewhat agree	30%
Somewhat disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	7%
DK/ref	1%

**Q30. The government should provide longer periods of unemployment insurance benefits beyond the 26 weeks currently provided in most states. N=1015**

Strongly agree	32%
Somewhat agree	30%
Somewhat disagree	20%
Strongly disagree	15%
DK/ref	3%



**Q30a. The [federal government/ President Bush] is considering providing unemployed individuals with a personal reemployment account to provide enhanced flexibility, choice, and control in obtaining intensive reemployment, training, and supportive services, as well as a cash reemployment bonus for early return to work. Would you favor or oppose such a program?** N=499

Favor	72%
Oppose	21%
DK/ref	7%

**Q31. The federal government has several programs and resources to help dislocated workers during times of unemployment. Please tell me if you or a family member have ever used any of the following.**

**Q32. US Department of Labor's America's Job Bank, a federal job skills database and career resource website.** N=502

Yes	20%
No	75%
DK/ref	4%

**Q33. Your local One-Stop Career Center, that offers employment, education, and training services** N=502

Yes	30%
No	67%
DK/ref	3%

**Q34. Overall, how would you rate the job that President Bush is doing handling issues related to jobs?** N=502

Excellent	8%
Good	24%
Fair	32%
Poor	31%
DK/ref	4%

**Q35. Overall, how would you rate the job that Congress is doing handling issues related to jobs?** N=502

Excellent	1%
Good	20%
Fair	39%
Poor	33%
DK/ref	7%

Now, I just have a few questions for classification purposes.

**D1. I am going to read you a list of occupations, please tell me the one that most closely corresponds to the work you did or currently perform for your primary employer. (Read choices)** N=1015

Professional	23%
Managerial	9%
Service	12%
Manufacturing	8%
Processing	2%
Technical	9%
Clerical and sales	12%
Health Care	8%
Agriculture	3%
Other	12%
Dk/ref	2%

**D2. Which best describes your current primary employer? Is it a...(Read choices)** N=1015

Private, for profit business	56%
The government	16%
A non-profit organization	10%
Myself-I am self employed	10%
I am unemployed	7%
Dk/ref	2%

**D3. Including all full and part time jobs, how many years in total have you been working?** \_\_\_\_\_ (Enter 2 digits)

Dk/ref

**D4. How many people does the organization or company where you work employ? (Read choices)** N= 886

Less than 25 people	26%
25-99 people	17%
100-249 people	10%
250 or more people	45%
Dk/ref	2%

**D5. Are you married?** N=1015

Yes, married	62%
No, not married	32%
Dk/ref	0%

**D6. Do you have any children under the age of 18 who live at home?** N=1015

Yes	42%
No	58%
Dk/ref	0%

**D7. Are you a member of a labor union or teacher's association? (If Yes: Ask which one)** N=1015

Yes	13%
No (Skip to Q10)	86%
Dk/ref	1%

**D8. Which are you a member of: a labor union or a teacher's association?** N=135

Labor union	74%
Teachers association	25%
Dk/ref	1%

**D9. In politics today, do you consider yourself to be a Democrat, Republican, Independent or something else?** N=1015

Democrat	34%
Republican	25%
Independent	21%
Other	11%
Dk/ref	9%

**D10. What was the last grade of school you have completed?** N=1015

Grade school or less	1%
Some high school	6%
High school	42%
Some college (1-3 years)	26%
College grad (4 years)	16%
Post graduate (beyond 4 years)	7%
Dk/ref	2%

**D11. Are you of Hispanic origin?** N=1015

Yes	13%
No	88%
Dk/ref	0%

**D12. Are you Black, White, Asian, Native American or something else?** N=1015

Black	12%
White	72%
Hispanic	7%
Asian	1%
Native American	1%
Other	2%
Dk/ref	2%

**D13. Including all members of your household, is your total income before taxes. Please stop me when I reach your category. (read choices)**

**N=1015**

Under \$10,000	7%
10,000 to less than 20,000	9%
20,000 to less than 30,000	11%
30,000 to less than 40,000	11%
40,000 to less than 50,000	8%
50,000 to less than 75,000	16%
75,000 or more	18%
Dk/ref	20%

**D14. In what year were you born?\_\_\_\_\_ (Record year) (4 digits)**

Dk/ref

**D15. Sometimes a reporter likes to call a survey participant for further comment. Would you be willing to be contacted?N=1018**

Yes	54%
No	46%

**Thank you for your time and cooperation. That's all the questions I have.**



John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
33 Livingston Avenue, Fifth Floor  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732/932-4100, ext. 717  
[www.heldrich.rutgers.edu](http://www.heldrich.rutgers.edu)



University of Connecticut  
341 Mansfield Road, Room 400  
Storrs, CT 06269-1164  
860/486-2579

The *Work Trends* series:  
download reports and releases at  
[www.heldrich.rutgers.edu](http://www.heldrich.rutgers.edu)